with General Health Care services, free health care for leprosy are available at all primary health centres and Government hospitals and dispensaries. This includes diagnosis and supply of anti-leprosy drugs. The NGOs are involved in creating public awareness and providing support in the prevention of deformities and rehabilitation. The Central Leprosy Teaching and Research Institute mainly acts as referral centre for complicated cases. It is also involved in operational research and training.

Measures to check epidemics in Tsunami affected areas

555. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Tsunami toll in December, 2004 in coastal areas has resulted in fears of epidemic for persons living in the areas;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to check it and protect the people living in those areas;

(c) whether any foreign help was also sought for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) There were no reports of outbreak of diseases in the Tsunami affected areas. Epidemiologists and public health specialists from premier public health institutions visited Tsunami affected areas, reviewed disease surveillance measures and monitored potential outbreaks. A central surveillance unit has been established at Port Blair with six peripheral units in the affected islands for intensive monitoring of the post tsunami public health situation and to take appropriate measures as and when necessary. Another Tsunami Disease Surveillance Unit has been set up in JIPMER, Pondicherry for surveillance in the affected coastal belts of Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu. Apart from health manpower deployment, adequate emergency medical stores (drugs, consumables, disinfectants, insecticides) have been supplied to the affected States/Union Territories.

The Central Government in coordination with affected States provided emergency medical relief and taken public health measures and no foreign help was sought for the purpose.